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ART IN DRESS

FASHIONS OF OUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHERS.



"Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" In this emergency, Rose Bertin and her workwomen set their wits to work, and from their new headquarters in smoky London sent forth upon the world a variety of extraordinary modes culminating in the "costume merveilleuse." From this eccentricity was developed the antique mania, and assuredly with all its faults we find in the fashions of that style much that is beautiful and worthy of reproduction. The charming women of Napoleon's family adopted this fashion unanimously, and have handed it down to posterity in the best-known pictures bequeathed to us of that brilliant coterie of would-be sovereigns. Pauline Bonaparte, when plain Madame Leclerc, appeared once at a ball dressed in fine India muslin with hems of gold, girdled below the bosom with a gold band clasped by a superb cameo. The short sleeves were also fastened with cameos, and the classic head-dress, consisting of bands of fine tiger fur, surmounted by bunches of golden grapes, made her a faithful copy of a Bacchante of classic mould. Mme. Tallien, also a toast of the day, is described as wearing a plain robe of India muslin, with folds in the antique style, fastened at the shoulders by two cameos; a gold belt encircled her waist, and was likewise fastened with a cameo. Her hair, of a glossy black, was short, and curled in a fashion then called "à la Titus." Over her fair shoulders was thrown a superb red cashmere shawl, an article at that time very rare and in great request. Thus attired, Madame Tallien, a bel-esprit as well as a beauty, made good her claim to the description "a Venus of the Capitol, but more beautiful than the work of Phidias."



Another evening dress of that period has been recorded as a model of good taste. It was worn by Madame Permon, Napoleon's early love, upon the occasion of the marriage festival of her daughter, afterward Duchesse d'Abrantes, and is thus described by that lively writer: "My mother was perhaps the prettiest woman in the room after the First Consul's two sisters. She wore a robe of white crape, trimmed with bunches of double jonquils. Its form was Grecian, folding over the bosom and fastened on the shoulders with two diamond clasps. On her fine black hair, resembling velvet, she wore a toque of white crape with branches of jonquils, and in her bosom a large bouquet of jonquils and violets. She exhibited neither necklace nor jewels of any kind, except two fine diamond drops in her ears. I was proud of my mother."

The graceful simplicity of the walking dress of that time and later (for this fashion held in England and France extended to America) may be judged by the illustration given herewith. Gowns were short-waisted, low, and square, the sleeve a mere puff, the skirt easily and lightly draped. Long wrinkled gloves of white or tan color were worn then as now. The hair clustered in soft rings around the brow, and the bonnet was moderate in size and becoming in shape. A scarf of silk or crape, the ends

caught together in a tassel or "gland," was worn upon the shoulders, and the inevitable reticule hung coquettishly upon one arm. Shoes bore a striking resemblance to the sandals of antiquity. They were very low, and were held in place by ribbon lacings. Thus equipped, a late eighteenth century or an early nineteenth century belle had no hesitation in sallying forth to brave the inclemency of the weather. In winter, the palatine, a fashion borrowed from the North of Europe, made its appearance, together with the man-like beaver hat, the muff, and waving veil.

It was after the Restoration in France, about the year 1815, that the mania for classic simplicity disappeared to be succeeded by a style familiar to Americans in many of the family pictures found in our older mansions. Alas for the departure of beautiful outlines, of unlaced figures, of easy motion in walk or dance! The hair was now drawn back in the middle, profusely curled upon the temples, and clubbed on top in a most forbidding knot. The skirts were distended, the hideous leg-of-mutton sleeve was developed, the wide ruffled collar concealed the line of throat and bust. A silk apron, ruffled and bowed, was part of a lady's home toilet, and can only be said to possess the negative merit of looking "quaint."



In evening-dress a turban was worn, concealing the shape of the head. Long busks, and a "bertha" or neck trimming of uncouth shape, with leg-of-mutton sleeves, completed the decoration of the dress. If the club of hair remained uncovered, it was adorned with two or three wild-looking plumes, inserted without taste or discretion. English straw bonnets, with green gauze veils, and long-waisted spencers (associated indissolubly in our minds with the gala attire of the immortal Miss Fanny Squeers), became the rage. In 1820, leg-of-mutton sleeves attained such an enormous size, and were made so rigid through an understructure of whalebone, that a woman of fashion wearing them found it hard to pass through an ordinary door. Among the minor toilet necessities of that day, we may include sashes of China crape and gauze, belts of hair, diamond or paste waist-buckles, morocco bags, lace mantillas, satin parasols, and velvet overshoes lined with fur, most of which small indispensables may be found to-day in the wardrobe of a modern society woman, another proof that history does but repeat itself in every phase.

C. C. H.

COSTUME HINTS FROM PICTURES.

GORGEOUS metallic embroideries are Eastern in origin. Byzantine court-ladies wore them in profusion, and they came down to us all through the Middle Ages. They show opulently in the work of early Renaissance painters, Virgins and Magdalens being often covered with golden flowers and leaves. Carlo Crevelli, one of the earliest of the quattro-cento painters, lavishes them abundantly upon his unlovely saints and Madonnas, and one of his Virgins, in the English National Gallery, wears a mantle embroidered with golden flowers much larger than her head! Crevelli's stuffs are always like early nineteenth century bedchamber patterns for size of design. One saint of his, also in the National Gallery, has her sleeves embroidered with huge golden birds, two to a sleeve!

Those critics of modern fashions who are always telling women to go to pictures to learn how to dress, perhaps have never noticed the utter impracticability of many ideally painted costumes. Those color-and-form-loving men of the Renaissance, (except generally the Venetians) were not painting wearable clothes, but only picturable ones. Hence, a sharp-eyed woman may go through the great galleries and pick out dozens of rich and royal robes which stay on well enough where they are, but which off a canvas would never cling to human form for an instant. And there are other "unrealities" beside inability to stay on. A Flemish picture by Vanderweyden is a case in point. A Magdalen in æsthetic green velvet, confined in large folds at the waist, sits reading her breviary. Her dress is open in a V over a stomacher exquisitely embroidered with seed pearls. The huge sleeve and the bottom of the high art robe are edged with narrow fur, and as

she sits, the bottom of her robe is drawn up to her knees, evidently to show the marvel of seed-pearl embroidery on the petticoat beneath. This petticoat is gorgeous, rich but not startling, and is well worth the pains the Magdalen takes to show it. But the "unreality" is just this, that from the many and massive folds upon the Magdalen's knees, by which largeness and sweep the painter meant to give dignity to his figure, any woman may plainly see that the robe must have been at least two yards longer in front than the Magdalen is tall, and that no human being could ever walk in such a dress, be she saint or sinner. As for Rubens's matronly Sabines, not one of them could keep clothed above the waist, except by the free use of glue, and some of Sir Joshua Reynolds' ideal women keep their clothes on purely by "moral suasion."

A picture of the Crucifixion is a singular one from which to extract ideas for artistic dressing! Nevertheless, among the small and ugly women of a Crucifixion in the National Gallery, by Patinir—an Antwerp painter of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—is one elegant figure, whose dress and form would make the belle of a nineteenth century æsthetic soirée. The robe is of dull, creamy stuff, embroidered all over in a faint and delicate pattern of gold. This embroidery is so vague that it is an effect almost rather than a fact, and, except that it is more delicate, reminds one of the faintest and fairest of the Liberty Oriental silks (dyed, by the way, in England).

The dress clings as tightly to the slender figure as a modern "tie-back" and is all in one piece from throat to feet in front. At the back the bottom of the waist is defined by large folds of the trained skirt, the latter being separated from the bodice and then united in graceful Watteau-like folds—that is, Watteau-like in style, not position. The under sleeves are of blue velvet tight to the arm. Over them are large sleeves of the creamy silk, split a little way from the top of the arm so as to show the blue sleeve beneath, but closing again at the wrist. The neck is moderately décolleté, with a loose fold of the silk tied airily about the shoulders. A loose blue girdle slips over the graceful hips, and stops to be knotted in front about six inches below the curve of the hips.

The Irish Sir David Wilkie was about as little of an æsthete as any man who ever painted pictures. But in his "Blind Fiddler" there is a pretty costume, even though all of coarse stuff and worn by a buxom, middle-aged peasant woman. The petticoat is of sombre green, too dark to be olive, too light to be "invisible." The short gown is of a soft, dull yellow, with a hint of smothered gold. Of course it is loose to the figure, but more defined in shape than any sack or blouse. The sleeves are rolled up above a robust arm into puckers and folds that are just as artistic as if done by any



Madame de la Mode of the Rue de la Paix. A bit of coarse chemise shows all about the edge of the rolled-up sleeve, and is as pretty as if it were a dash of fleecy tulle or royal Point d'Alençon. A square cotton kerchief folded in a triangle and knotted low upon the breast, leaving the neck half décolleté, completes this peasant costume. Translate it all into soft nun's cloth and green brocade or Tussore silk and velvet, and see how pretty it would be, though simplicity itself.

But gowns do not need to be of brocade, silk, or velvet,

in order to be pretty. I remember a young American girl in Venice who, before painted dresses were fashionable as they have been since, invented a gown for herself which did not cost her a song. The material was a soft, black nun's cloth, and she made it with yoke, plaited body, and belt. Sleeves, yoke, belt, and front of skirt were painted with white daisies, each daisy taking, I believe, eight strokes of the brush, seven for petals and a dab of yellow for the golden heart. She wore this dress for the first time at a regatta upon the Grand Canal, given in honor of the Queen, without thinking in the least of the significance of her decorations. But almost every Venetian who saw her smiled approvingly upon her and said: "Ah, la bella Americana, she wears Marguerites for our Queen!"

Correspondence.

THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE "CHESAPEAKE POTTERY."

SIR: Referring to your notice of the production of our "Chesapeake Pottery" in your last issue, we would say, we do "think it exactly honorable" to call one of the kinds of ware we have originated, "Avalon Faience." Our intention has been from the beginning to produce wares that our fair city should not be ashamed of. Confident of success we named our pottery after the beautiful bay at the head of which Baltimore stands. Our underglaze ware we call "Clifton" after a well-known suburb given to our city by the late Johns Hopkins in his magnificent bequest. Another grade we call "Avalon." This was one of the titles of Lord Baltimore, the name of an estate of his, a musical word you will admit. If it resembles the name of a celebrated manufacturer of French China it is certainly no fault of ours. "Faience," Webster says, is a collective name for all the various kinds of glazed earthenware and porcelain. The Havilands have no more right to it than any other individual. Our drab colored vitreous ware we call "Cecil," another of the names of the founder of our city, and the name of a county in our State that furnishes a grade of kaolin we use in the ware. Our blue vitreous ware we call "Arundel" after another county which furnishes a valuable clay used in the production of this very beautiful body. Thus you will see we have not invaded the rights of any other potter, but have been intensely local in our nomenclature. We are sure you will publish this as an answer to your query.

D. F. HAYNES & Co., Baltimore, Md.

SOME HISTORICAL QUERIES ABOUT OLD CHINA.

SIR: Will some of your English readers tell me, in brief, the history of "Fountain's Abbey" in England? I have the print of a dark blue Staffordshire plate, and I know that the Abbey has been painted in oil by some distinguished artist. It must have a story, as Fonthill Abbey has. I would like also to learn from some cultivated English or American reader, who is now the owner of the vase or tub of "azure hue" made famous by the poet Cowper, in his lines upon the death of a cat drowned while attempting to catch a gold-fish. The tub stood in a corridor at Strawberry Hill, and was one of Horace Walpole's treasures. Even after a coldness sprang up between Walpole and his distinguished tutor, he still kept a copy of the poem pasted upon the blue china tub. I learned that at the sale in 1842 the then Earl of Derby bought the vase; and I wrote to the present Earl. He answered my letter, but not my question. He said, however, that it was not in his possession. I wished very much to obtain a drawing or photograph of the piece, and would be pleased to know who is the present possessor.

MRS. MARY E. NEALY,

Washington, D. C.

FRENCH TASTE IN NEW YORK INTERIORS.

SIR: In interior decoration, it must be admitted that French taste still keeps its position of pre-eminence. We may, for a time, run after Japanese or Moorish novelties, or affect to be inspired by the ornamentation of Micmacs or Sioux, but not being Semites or Mongols or Red Indians we are very apt to come back for a quiet resting-place to the grand and many-voiced Caucasian art, and to its finest modern examples in the art of France. Not only in the higher arts; in painting and sculpture, do the French of our day hold their own against the world; but, even more apparently, in those decorative arts that less artistic peoples take to with the idea that success in them is easy. Most especially in work that is claimed as art manufacture is the superiority of the Gaul made manifest. His wall papers, his bronze and iron castings, his stuffs and pottery and so forth, are now, as they have been since Colbert's time, the best made in Europe. And when he refuses to be led by the prevailing eclecticism to imitate the effects peculiar to other races, and contents himself with following in the path marked out by his predecessors in his own country, his work only of all modern decoration can be said to have that undefinable quality which we call style.

Here in New York, with all the prevailing rage for house decoration, we have seen very little of the turn that French taste is now taking. The prevailing fashion is to look to England for exemplars in everything at all related to social life, and since art has become "chic" the peculiarities of the English artistic movement have been so extensively copied here that they have come to be associated in the minds of many with decorative art in general. People find in Gilbert and Sullivan's clever satires, which one would think would hardly be understood outside of London, something apropos of the rage for decoration here; although, in sober fact, the most extravagant of our work shows an affectation of nativism—a barbaric effusiveness appropriate to California or Nevada, or a dainty primness supposed to have something to do with New England traditions—that is much funnier than the English whimsies. Generally what we see of English taste is its most sober and rational manifestations. With Wm. Morris's manufactures for instance, with Minton's tiles, with English grates and iron work generally, little fault can be found, on the score of unreason. All is quiet, unpretentious, useful, and becoming. But when, as occasionally happens, we find an apartment fitted with French productions of the sort, it is impossible not to see the vast superiority of the latter in elegance and grace. Our own manufactures it must not be supposed that I would undervalue. In isolated arts, in stained glass for instance, we may claim to lead the world. In others we can make an excellent showing; but when an attempt is made to furnish even a single room throughout with American products or in a distinctively American taste, it becomes plain how much we have still to learn and acquire before we shall reach the position of older nations in the arts that beautify life.

To take as an example only one of the many imposing houses that have been this season fitted up in a style unknown to old New York and in which all available talent and skill, native and foreign, have been utilized—a splendid apartment house on Madison Avenue—the impression is unavoidable that not all the taste and ingenuity displayed in it would have produced a really satisfactory effect if the materials furnished by French looms and paper mills, potteries and foundries, were not obtainable. The large wall-surfaces, well lighted by many windows, the high ceilings, the

spacious rooms, would present but a barren or semi-barbarous appearance if these were absent. Japanese gold-woven tissues, screens of spindle work, porcelain bath-tubs imported from China, Eastern rugs and Moorish dados are all very well in their way when brought together with taste and discrimination as they have been in the apartments occupied by Mr. Frank T. Robinson, but a harmony, complete and satisfying, extending from the ensemble to the smallest detail, can hardly be produced from an assemblage of objects of different styles and periods and countries. And to what country but France can one look for the means to fulfil all the requirements of modern life?

Whoever is tempted to undervalue contemporary French art manufactures would do well to study for some hours one of the floors in the house just mentioned. From the satiny paper in delicate grays and half tints to the chandelier of cut crystal all is French, or in the French taste. It is distinctly modern, yet there is that aroma of elegance about it which so affected Balzac when he described the Louis Quinze wedding-chamber in "Les Chouans." There is nothing that is not as it should be, nothing that does not keep its place. It would take the particularizing pen of the great romancer to properly describe this apartment, and yet when its belongings are taken separately, there is nothing, seemingly, to dwell upon. A few steps in the same house will bring one face to face with richer hangings, more elaborate carving, more curious contrivances; but it would be hard to find in the country a completer expression of quiet cheerfulness and enjoyment of what is agreeable in life. More ambitious, more fantastic surroundings can be and have been purchased for themselves by our millionaires, but the wealthiest might well be satisfied with such as these for his hours of privacy.

ROBERT JARVIS, New York.

[We do not quite agree with Mr. Jarvis. He seems to judge contemporary French decorative art by the work he has seen in the Madison Avenue apartment house he mentions. This was executed by Marcotte, a firm almost exceptional in its artistic application of French ideas. As a rule we consider the modern French ideas for interior decoration—especially as to upholstery—flimsy and theatrical; and it is natural for persons in this country to show a preference for the more homelike and comfortable productions of England. The French themselves are beginning to acknowledge the superiority of English furniture. In a recent address to the students of the Tiverton School of Art, Mr. J. Sparkes said that "the French monopoly of designing had come to an end in England. A man told him the other day that he sent to Paris every year £2000 worth of designs. He was informed by Sir Philip Owen, on the authority of personal friends in Paris, that ever since the last French exhibition English furniture had been the rage there, and that French dealers found that it was better to buy from English firms than to trust to imitations which were obviously inferior. He had recently met in London a French business man who had come with £8000 in his pocket to buy English furniture. A revolution had come about, and instead of the English going to France for ideas, they come to them. Of course, all this had not come about by accident. The whole thing had been a matter of slow growth. England had been thirty years doing it." Americans, he said, often visited South Kensington, and frequently saw all through the place in half an hour; but he generally told them that it would take them in their country quite thirty years to accomplish similar results, and that the artisans in England would not stand still while they were learning how to do it.—ED. A. A.]

THE ONLY REMEDY FOR "BLISTERING."

SIR: (1) When painting on china, if, after being fired, small particles of color flake off or blister and crack open, is there any possible means of covering the defect by repeated coats of color? Could white be applied and then painted over with the proper shade, and fired again with success? (2) Will you please give some designs for painting on porcelain cuff buttons, circular in shape?

SUBSCRIBER, Selma, Ala.

ANSWER.—(1) You have probably used too much flux or applied too thickly some color that should be thinly used. Another firing would be pretty certain to cause more blistering and cracking, and thus aggravate the evil. The only thing you can do is to send the piece to a decorator and have the color all removed, and then paint it over again from the beginning. (2) We shall probably give some cuff button designs soon.

THE COMPOSITION OF BRONZE.

S. P. H., Chicago.—There is difference of opinion as to the right proportion of copper and tin or other metals used in the production of bronze. Dumas, in "Chimie appliquée aux Arts," recommends a mixture of 100 parts (by weight) of copper, 6 to 7 parts of tin, 6 to 7 of zinc, which produces a bronze of a fine golden color, highly suitable for artistic manipulation. Gmelin says the best alloy for statues which are to be gilt, is composed of copper 78.5 parts, zinc 17.2, tin 2.9, and lead 1.4; and for other casting the bronze should be composed of copper, 91.25; zinc, 5.50; tin, 2.00; and lead, 1.25.

TO PAINT BARBERIES IN OIL COLORS.

SUBSCRIBER, Troy, N. Y.—To paint in oils the design of "Barberies" in the February ART AMATEUR proceed as follows: For the berries mix vermilion and carmine; shade with carmine and brown madder or Rubens madder. The berries in the strongest lights should have more vermilion, especially in the highest lights. Berries behind or in the background paint in crimson lake shaded as above. Use for the foliage, zinober greens 1, 2 and 3, Indian yellow, indigo and Vandyck brown. Paint the stems in Vandyck brown, white, and a little indigo.

INFORMATION FOR A BEGINNER IN WATER-COLORS.

NELIGH REPUBLICAN, Neligh, Neb.—(1) Directions for water-color painting have been given in previous numbers of THE ART AMATEUR. They are resumed with the present issue in a series of articles on flower-painting. The following directions for mixing colors are very general, but as you are a beginner they will probably serve your purpose for the present. After a little practice you will prefer to make your own combinations: For purple, blue and rose lake mixed with white make a variety of shades. For sky, use blue and white. For clouds, use blue, white, black, and vermilion. For light horizon of sky, use Naples yellow and white; add orange chrome yellow, for sunrise or sunset. For water, use blue, white, and Naples yellow; add umber to make shadows or dark reflections in water. For mountains in distance, use blue, white, vermilion, or rose lake. For autumn foliage, use gold ochre and green for one tint, sienna and green for another tint, Venetian red and green for a different tint, and umber and green for another tint; but do not mix many colors together. Avoid much mixing. For bright autumn foliage, use chrome yellow and green, vermilion and green, and orange chrome and green. For the brightest effect each color pure. For ground-work for foliage, use umber and green. For different shades of roses, use rose lake and white. For slate color, use black and white. For steel color or French gray, use black, white, and a little blue. For cream color, use Naples yellow and white. For buff color, use ochre or sienna and white. (2) Many panel de-

signs suitable for your side-board will be found in back numbers of this magazine. (3) Special porcelain tiles sold for decorating may be had from any of the dealers in artist materials who advertise with us. (3) The mineral colors necessary for china-painting may be had from the same dealers. (4) Portable kilns suitable for firing small decorated pieces of china in an ordinary kitchen stove are sold by Stearns Fitch & Co., Albany, N. Y., and N. M. Ford, Port Richmond, N. Y.

SUNDRY QUERIES ANSWERED.

SIR: Is the vellum alluded to in THE ART AMATEUR for fan painting only intended for water-colors; and is it the same article used for crayon and pastel work? Is it sold by the sheet?

SUBSCRIBER, Selma, Ala.

ANSWER.—The vellum for fan painting is much finer than that used for crayon and pastel work. Indeed, in this country kid is preferred. Only water-colors are suitable for fan painting. The vellum is sold by the skin. Vellum paper is sold by the sheet.

SIR: (1) Can you induce some artist to give a system of "handling" in crayon portraiture? (I mean free hand not on solar base.) (2) Where can I see specimens of the best crayon work? (3) What does it cost to bind a year's numbers of THE ART AMATEUR.

J. R. B., Hudson, N. Y.

ANSWER.—(1) We shall give some practical hints on crayon portraiture in an early number. (2) At the best photographic studios. When you are in New York call at the galleries of Sarony or Kurtz. (3) From \$4 to \$6.

P. S., Troy, N. Y.; CHARLES B., New Orleans; R. P. T., Toledo, O.; TRENT, Oswego, N. Y.; B. H., Chicago.—We must respectfully decline to give information by mail. To this rule we can make no exception, unless the correspondent desires us to hand the letter to an expert who will supply drawings and samples of colors in consideration of receiving a professional fee. Whatever information of *general interest* we can impart through these columns we cheerfully give without charge. But it is too much for correspondents to expect us to write to them personally and give expert opinions for their individual benefit, which we must not publish. Inquirers, like the lady at Fort Scott, Kansas, who sends us a long communication calling for information concerning furnishing a house, involving much time and thought, with the postscript, "Please do not answer this in THE ART AMATEUR," will understand why we have not complied and cannot comply with such requests for private correspondence.

MRS. J. W. WILLIAMS, Harlem, will please note our answer to J. R. B., Hudson, N. Y.

W. F. ECCLES, Pullman, Ill.—Your questions are of a kind that should be addressed to a paper like The Scientific American.

C. J. H., Portsmouth, N. H.—Thank you for your friendly suggestion. We shall soon take up the subject of heraldry.

MRS. J. K. C., Mexico, Mo.—To paint peach blossoms, in oils, use German rose madder; for shadows, white, ivory black and yellow ochre, with a touch of the rose madder; for high lights, white and rose madder, with a touch of cadmium yellow. Wild roses may be painted with the same colors. For yellow peaches use cadmium yellow and white; shade with burnt umber and carmine tempered with the local tint; for high lights use white, ivory black and a very little burnt sienna.

MRS. J. H. S., Stafford, Kan.—For preparing a photograph to color in oils "Newman's Sizing Preparation" is generally used in England. If your artist material dealer does not keep it—which he probably does not, for there is not much call for it—he may have some other preparation which would do as well. N. E. Montross, 1380 Broadway, New York, has it.

B. T., New Brunswick, N. J.—It is best to leave oil paintings unvarnished for several months.

S. P. T., Brooklyn, N. Y.—You should try and induce your lady sitter to wear some differently colored dress. It would be difficult to treat a mass of cold and positive blue to harmonize with the rest of the picture.

W. ARENS, Leadville, Col.—Probably you can obtain a photograph of Thorwaldsen's bas-relief of the "Ages of Love" by writing to Soule, Boston, or George Kirchner, East 14th St., New York.

A SUBSCRIBER, San Diego, Cal.—(1) "A Deck plaque" is a plaque from the famous Paris firm of artistic faience manufacturers of that name. (2) "Stratena" is a good cement for broken china. (3) We do not know of any firms at present who are offering prizes for holiday card designs.

H. C. L., Philadelphia.—All necessary directions for firing decorated china in portable kilns are given, we believe, in the circulars of the manufacturers. See our answer (4) to "Ne-ligh Republican."

New Publications.

FRENCH VIEWS OF ENGLISH ART.

LA PEINTURE ANGLAISE. Par ERNEST CHESNEAU (Bibliothèque de l'enseignement des Beaux-Arts. New York: J. W. Bouton). The need has long been felt of a careful review of the English school of painting, and especially of the contemporary English school, by a critic brought up in the Continental traditions, but capable of freeing his mind of them so far as to be able to form an unbiased judgment. That need is well supplied by the present work. M. Chesneau is a writer of considerable ability, logical, well-informed, and open to impressions from all sides. He is not, as is too often the case, carried away by either the faults or the virtues of the painters whose works he undertakes to describe. He has given to his subject full and conscientious study. He has overlooked nothing of much importance, and though he occasionally gives too little space to men of the calibre of William Blake or the late D. G. Rossetti, and though he makes altogether too much of the Anglo-Saxon element in English art, his treatise is on the whole well-proportioned and satisfactory.

The book is divided into two portions, the first dealing with the old school from Hogarth to Barry and Turner, the second with the painters of to-day, the pre-Raphaelites and their opponents. Of the former he thinks that its work is generally clever, often full of talent, eminently personal, original at times, but lacking essentially in genius. He would except merely Gainsborough, Constable, Old Crome, and Turner. Hogarth he considers as being a moralist rather than a painter. Reynolds depends too much on his learning, and generally the school is by far too literary in its motives; the subject, or rather the spectator's prior knowledge of the subject, which is taken for granted, counts generally for too much.

Still, of this ancient school, the processes, the formulas were such as are common to all the European schools. The aim of the